A WILD WESTERN ADVENTURE.

Sam. S. Hall, "Buckskin Sam," and old Rip Ford were trapping in the Arkansas River regions. They were men of desperate courage, who had taken their lives in their hands too often to care for the danger they were exposed to. Old Rip was a man who stood five feet eleven in his moccasins--a man whom you would hardly care to meet in the close tug of a desperate battle. His hard brown face was seamed with scars from bullet, knife and claws of wild beasts, and his muscular body showed the marks of many a desperate struggle. "Buckskin Sam" was the beau ideal of a mountaineer and plains man, the Western hunter that the novelist paints and the school-boy dreams of and wishes some day to be. Although not so powerful as Old Rip, he was a man of great personal strength and desperate courage. For many a year these two had roamed the trapping grounds together, fighting the Indians, grizzlies and wolves, chased by night over the burning prairies, defending their camp against the sudden attacks of red fiends, or spending recklessly at the monte-board the money they had earned so hardly on the trapping ground.

They had been out all winter, and, as spring approached, the last cache was covered and the trappers now began to think of returning home. The camp was built up near the river, a tributary of the Canadian which flowed through dismal canyons in which the light of day never shows, under the shadow of gigantic cliffs upon which human beings never yet set foot, and only spreading out at places where the cunning beaver had built his dam. The river was broken by great rapids, and abounded in rare fish, upon which they had feasted royally for many a day. They had a canoe, and had been discussing the chance of going down the stream in that in order to save time.

"I am ready to take the chances, if you are, Rip," said Sam.

"I don't like to give myself away," said Rip. "What do you know about the river after we get down to the big canyon, and whoever passed through it?"

"That's the fun of the thing, Rip. We do what no one else dare do," said Sam.

"I don't like it," replied Ford, who was by far the most prudent of the two. "I—ha! what in Jehu is that?" They seized their weapons and ran to the door of the hut, just in time to see a dozen Indians running down through the grass, blocking up the only way of escape. The moment the repeating rifle began to play upon them they went out of sight among the rocks and began their gradual approach, which could only end in one way—the white trappers would be overwhelmed!

"There's only one chance, Rip," cried Sam.

"And that?"

"The canoe."

"I am your man," cried the giant trapper. "You push the canoe into the water and throw in the weapons while I keep those fellows at bay. Oh, would you? Take that."

An Indian had raised his tufted head to get a better shot at the trappers, but before he could get back the unfailing eyes of the trapper had looked through the double sights and the rifle cracked. The Indian sprung suddenly to his feet, spun sharp around upon his heel and fell dead in his tracks.

The next moment the canoe shot from the bank and headed down through the boiling flood, plunging in the canyon below so rapidly that the Indians had scarcely time to recover from their amazement at the sudden exodus before the trappers were out of sight. One of the Indians bounded to his feet and uttered a low signal-whoop, and two large canoes, containing in all about fifteen men, rounded a point in the river above the canyon and came flying down under the strokes of the paddles. The Indians on the shore simply pointed down the stream, and the canoes dashed by at a furious speed, the wild yell of the paddlers announcing to the white men that they were pursued. The first rapid passed, they entered a long stretch of water where the current was only four or five miles an hour, and there the propelling force in the other canoes began to tell, and the Indians gained rapidly.

On each side of the canoe the canyon was like a wall, 200 feet in height, and the trappers could only put all their strength in the paddles and dash on as fast as they could. Two miles further and the pursuing canoes were scarcely a hundred yards behind, the Indians yelling like demons as they saw the white men almost within their grasp. Rip Ford shook his head as he looked over his shoulder, when suddenly his canoe was seized by a mighty force and hurled downward, like a bullet from a rifle. They had struck another rapid more powerful than the first, and the rocks absolutely seemed to fly past them.

"This is something like it," cited the daring Buckskin Sam. "How we do move."

"I should say we did, old boy," replied Rip. "I am only afraid we are moving too fast."

"Don't you believe it; those fellows seem to be standing still," said Sam.

"They will get in the current in a moment," gasped Rip. "Look at that."

The headmost canoe of the Indians appeared upon the crest of the rapid and came flying down after the trappers at a furious speed. The Indians no longer used their paddles with the exception of the man who sat at the stern and by a touch on the water, now on one side, now on the other, regulated the course of the canoe. The second canoe followed in a moment, a little further in shore As they gazed the bow of the last canoe was suddenly lifted into the air as it struck a brown rock in the channel, which the occupants tried in vain to avoid. The fierce current caught the stern, and in an instant there was nothing left of the craft save broken fragments, while the occupants, with loud shrieks of terror, were borne swiftly on by the resistless tide. "That ends them," said Rip Ford. "Be careful, Sam, for your life!"

On, on, borne by the power which they could not resist, the two canoes were hurried. There was a scene of wild exultation in the hearts of the white men, for they could see that their enemy would have gladly escaped if they could from the perils that surrounded them. Their mad desire for scalps and plunder had led them into a trap, and they no longer thought of the canoe in advance. They knew, as the whites did not, the terrible danger before them, for they had explored the banks of the stream on foot many times. The river suddenly narrowed, and the trappers rushed into a canyon barely twenty feet wide, and nearly roofed over by the cliff on each side. The current was not quite so rapid here and they guided the canoe easily.

"This gets interesting, Rip," said Sam, as they went on through the narrow pass. "We are going—" "To our death," interrupted Rip Ford, in a solemn voice. "Do you hear the falls?"

Through the splash of water and the dip of the paddles they heard a low, dead, tremulous roar, which was the sound of falling water. For a moment the bronzed face of Sam blanched, and then he drew his figure up proudly saying: "Better than the scalping-knife or stake, old friend. As the Frenchman says, 'Vive la mort!' Long live death!"

It was, indeed, before them, for as they shot out of the narrow pass they saw the falls—how high they could not tell, but the smoke which arose showed that it was not a small one. "Keep her head to it," cried Rip. "If we don't get through, it's good-bye, forever, Sam."

The swift current caught them, and the canoe, hurled forward with terrible force, went flying towards the verge. A moment more and it shot out in the midst and went down into the depths. Each man clung to his paddle as he went down, held by an invisible power, whirled to and fro, as in a maelstrom, and then shot up into the light below the falls. Far below them the canoe floated, and as the current swept them down the two men looked back in time to see the Indians' canoe come over the fall sideways without an occupant. It was hurled far out and fell lightly on the water, only to be arrested by the strong hand of Buckskin Sam.

The Indians, appalled by their danger, had upset the canoe in their frantic efforts to escape. What became of them the trappers never knew, for when they reached the foot of the rapid, far below the falls, and righted the canoe they made no pause, but hurried down the stream and before night were safely floating in the waters of the Canadian River. Two days later they reached Fort Sill in safety.—*San Francisco Golden Era.*

A BOY out at the elbows was asked the cause and replied, "I laughed in my sleeves till I burst 'em."

AN editor named his cat Plutarch because he had so many lives.

THE NEW ELECTRIC LIGHT.

Edison at Last Describes It--And Says It Will Answer Every Requirement, and Be Cheaper Than Gas.

[From the New York Herald.]

Edison's electric light was made the butt of ridicule by the American Gas-Light Association members who met here last week, and the great inventor was sought out to-day to see what he had to say for himself. "Are you positive," I inquired, "that you have found a light that will take the place of gas, and be much cheaper to consummers?"

"There can be no doubt about it," he replied.

"Is it an electric light?" I asked.

"It is," he answered, "electricity and nothing else."

He said that an electric light was no new discovery, and he only claimed that he had found out how to utilize it. His first experiments were made long ago. He spent a month trying to discover a light that would take the place of gas, but met with little success, and finally gave it up. After his removal to Menlo Park he made his own gas, and the trouble with the electric light was, it could not be subdivided. "I worked hard on it, however," he said, "and then I discovered the necessary secret, so simple that a bootblack could understand it. It suddenly came to me, the same as the secret of the speaking phonograph. It was real, and no phantom. I was as sure it would work as I was that the phonograph would work. I made my first machine. It was a success. Since then I have made nearly a dozen machines, each different, and the last ones improvements upon those first made. The subdivision of light is all right. The only thing to be actually determined is its economy. I am already positive that it will be cheaper than gas, but I have not determined how much cheaper. To determine its economy, I am now putting up a brick building back of my laboratory here. I have already ordered two 80-horse power engines for this building, with which to make the electricity. We use no batteries. We simply turn the power of steam into electricity, and the greater steam power we obtain the more electricity we get. I have already told you that electric lights have had marked intensity and a low quantity. I am turning it the other way—reducing the intensity and increasing the quantity of the light as far as possible. It requires a good deal of experimenting to ascertain how far this can be done. You alter the nature of the electric light when this is done. I have already done it to a certain extent, and don't think it was ever before attempted on the line on which I am at work."

On being questioned concerning the articles of incorporation of the Edison Electric Light Company, Mr. Edison said that they proposed to light the city' public buildings and private residences with electric lights. The electricity would be made by twenty or more engines, stationed in different parts of the city. "We could lay the wires right through the gas-pipes, and bring them into houses. All that will be necessary will be to remove the gas-burners and substitute electric burners. The light can be regulated by a screw, the same as gas. You may have a bright light or not, as you wish, and you can turn it down or up just as you please, and can shut it off at any time. No match is needed to light it. You turn the cock, the electric connection is made, the platinum burner catches a proper degree of heat, and there is your light. There is neither blaze nor flame, and there is no singing nor flickering. I don't pretend that it will give a much better light than gas, but it will be whiter and steadier than any known light. I do know now that it will be cheaper than gas. It will give no fumes nor smokes. No carbonic acid gas will be thrown off by combustion. It will be a great thing for compositors, engravers, and all forced to work during hot summer nights, for it will throw out scarcely any heat. Shades may be used, the same as shades upon gas lights, but there will be no necessity for them. The wind can't blow it out. There can be no gas explosions, and no one will be suffocated, because the electricity is turned on, and it cannot be turned on without lighting the burner. A person may have lamps made with flexible cords, and carry them from one point to another."

Mr. Edison says that electric generating machines could be placed upon steamboats and locomotives, and the boats and cars lighted by the action of the engines, but the instant that the machinery stopped the lights would go out, and he thinks that it may be necessary to have an extra engine in each station in cities to be prepared for accidents. If the first engine should break down, the second one could be used to feed the lights. Country towns, with the use of the electric generating machines, could be lighted by water-power. Any power could be used, provided it was strong enough to turn the shaft of the machine with the necessary rapidity.

The professor then exhibited an electric generating machine. It was what is known as the Wallace machine. A knot of magnets ran around the cylinder, facing each other, and wires were attached to it. Mr. Edison slipped a belt over the machine, and the engine used in his manufactory began to turn the cylinder. He touched the point of the wire on a small piece of metal near the window-casing, and there was a flash of blinding white light. It was repeated at each touch. "There is your steam power turned into an electric light," he said. There was the light, clear, cold and beautiful. The intense brightness was gone, and there was nothing irritating to the eye. The mechanism was so simple and perfect that it explained itself. The strip of platinum that acted as a burner *did not burn*. It was incandescent. It threw off a light pure and white, and it was set in a gallows-like frame; but it glowed with the phosphorescent effulgence of the star Altair. You could trace the veins in your hands and the spots and lines upon your finger-nails by its brightness. All the surplus electricity had been turned off, and the platinum shone with a mellow radiance through the small glass globe that surrounded it. A turn of the screw and its brightness became dazzling, and reduced itself to the faintest glimmer of a glow-worm. It seemed perfect.

"I would gladly give up the secret to the public," he said, "but the patents are not perfected. You know my trouble with the telephone in England. A burnt child dreads the fire. The public may not know, but I do know, that if a description of this invention reached Germany, Austria, and other counties in Europe before a patent is obtained, none can be secured. I lost the telephone patent in Germany through the newspapers."

Arctic Exploration.

A second report has been received from the Nordenskjold arctic expedition, dated Dickson's harbor, August 7. The expedition left Tromso July 21, passed by the north cape July 25, came in sight of the island of Novaja Semija July 28, and anchored up the next day at Habarowa, a Russian hunting place. In summer time Habarowa is quite a town, numbering about 100 inhabitants, Russian hunters with their Samojed slaves, living in tents around the church. In winter time all the tents are gone, and the church, built of undressed timber and moss, but bearing a large gilt cross on its roof, is left desolate and alone. The Samojeds, who are simple slaves, and follow their Russian masters, accompanied by their wives and children, are pagans, and have on the opposite island of Walgatsh a holy place with an idol and an altar, on which the visitors from the expedition found the head of a white bear still bleeding. The first ice was encountered along the coast of Novaja Semlja, where it lay scattered in huge blocks, but from Habarowa to Dickson harbor, through the Sound of Bell, of which a map was made, the way ran among drifting ice. Two men, lodged in barrels on the top of the mast, kept a steady lookout with the shifting movements of the ice, and gave the direction to the vessels. No serious embarrassments occurred. Besides the Neptune, whose lucky trip to the mouth of the Ob we reported some weeks ago, two other vessels—steamers—have this summer visited the northern coast of Siberia and made great bargains, exchanging various textile fabrics, hardware, sugar and spices for furs, skins, fish-oil, cereals and uncoined silver. A number of sacks of coffee could not be disposed of, however, as the natives are tea-drinkers and wholly unacquainted with coffee.

ONE of the Duchess County School Commissioners recently was called upon to make a speech to the children in the school-house. He arose and said: "You must excuse me, for I have been electing so much to-day that my throat is sore!" The same man in another speech alluded to voraciousness and added: "Children, I suppose you don't know what that means—voraciousness is truthfulness."—*Catskill Recorder.*

Artemus Ward vs. the Fat Contributor.

As reminiscences of Artemus Ward have been revived by a writer in Scribner, the Prompt Book is reminded of one, as related to him by John P. Smith, the well known manager of the "Uncle Tom" combination.

Mr. Smith was acting as advance agent for Artemus Ward during the time he was lecturing on the "Mormons" and exhibiting his panorama of Salt Lake City. While on their travels they came across Mr. A. Minor Griswold, the "Fat Contributor," who also had a panorama and comic lecture, and was advertised to appear in the same town.

The two old friends and celebrated comic writers enjoyed each other's company, and each one expatiated upon his success and the attractiveness of the show he was running.

Ward inquired of Griswold if his lecture was funny and his illustrations good, and receiving assurance to that effect he next asked Griswold what his nightly expenses were and what he could afford to exhibit for.

"Well, fifty dollars is a good paying house for me," replied the F. C.

"Then," said A. Ward, "if I saw fit to pay you $50 you'd be willing to give your entire show and let me supply the audience.

"Certainly I would," said Griswold.

"Done," said Ward, "I'll pay you $50, and you must deliver your lecture entire—no cutting. I'll hold the manuscript, and your minions must unwind all your paintings and give the show just as if you were before a regular audience."

"I'll do it," said Griswold, laughing; and the bargain was made.

Upon the night of the performance Ward called Smith and the attaches of his combination together, told them of his agreement, and gave them directions how to act during the performance, closing with the admonition that he would discharge any man on the spot who dared to even make the least attempt at a smile during Griswold's lecture.

At night Griswold was promptly at his reading desk and saw before him an audience of some twelve persons scattered around upon the front seats, and as he commenced the introduction of his lecture his auditors all, save one, drew newspapers from their pockets and quietly began reading, the only exception being Ward, who held the manuscript of the lecture to be delivered in his hand, and sat strictly following it word for word.

Griswold talked on, and the reverberation of his own voice in the empty hall and an occasional yawn by Ward was the only notification he had of there being an audience present. At every joke that fell from Griswold's lips a sob or a snore would greet the perpetrator.

After half an hour's steady work the lecturer found his task getting very monotonous, and offered to let Ward off for twenty-five dollars if he would allow him to shut up shop; but the unimpressionable Artemus would not accede, and demanded the entire performance. Another thirty minutes was passed in the same way, varied a little by confidential and muttered remarks among the auditors about stale jokes and infernal daubs of pictures, until Griswold gave up the ghost and begged off, preferring to pocket all the losses rather than submit to the torture of lecturing to such an audience.

The lecturers and their friends retired, and at the nearest restaurant enjoyed many jokes over the night's frolic.

DON'T point your gun at yourself. Don't point your gun at any one else. Don't carry your gun so that its range includes all your hunting companions. Don't try to find out whether your gun is loaded or not by shutting one eye and looking down the barrel with the other. Don't use your gun for a walking stick. Don't climb over a fence and pull your gun through muzzle foremost. Don't throw your gun into a boat so that the trigger will catch in the seat and the charge be deposited in your stomach. Don't use your gun for a sledge hammer. Don't carry your gun full cocked. Don't carry your gun with the hammer down. Don't be a fool. Don't you forget it.—*Forest and Stream.*

PROBABLY no men ever stood closer against a wall than did the four miners who, working in the shaft of a Nevada mine, heard the hoisting car break from its fastning far above their heads. They knew that there would be just a foot of space between the falling car and the wall, but they were not so sure about their own tickness, and there was no time for calculation. They made themselves as flat as possible, and escaped injury, although the shirt of one was torn off.